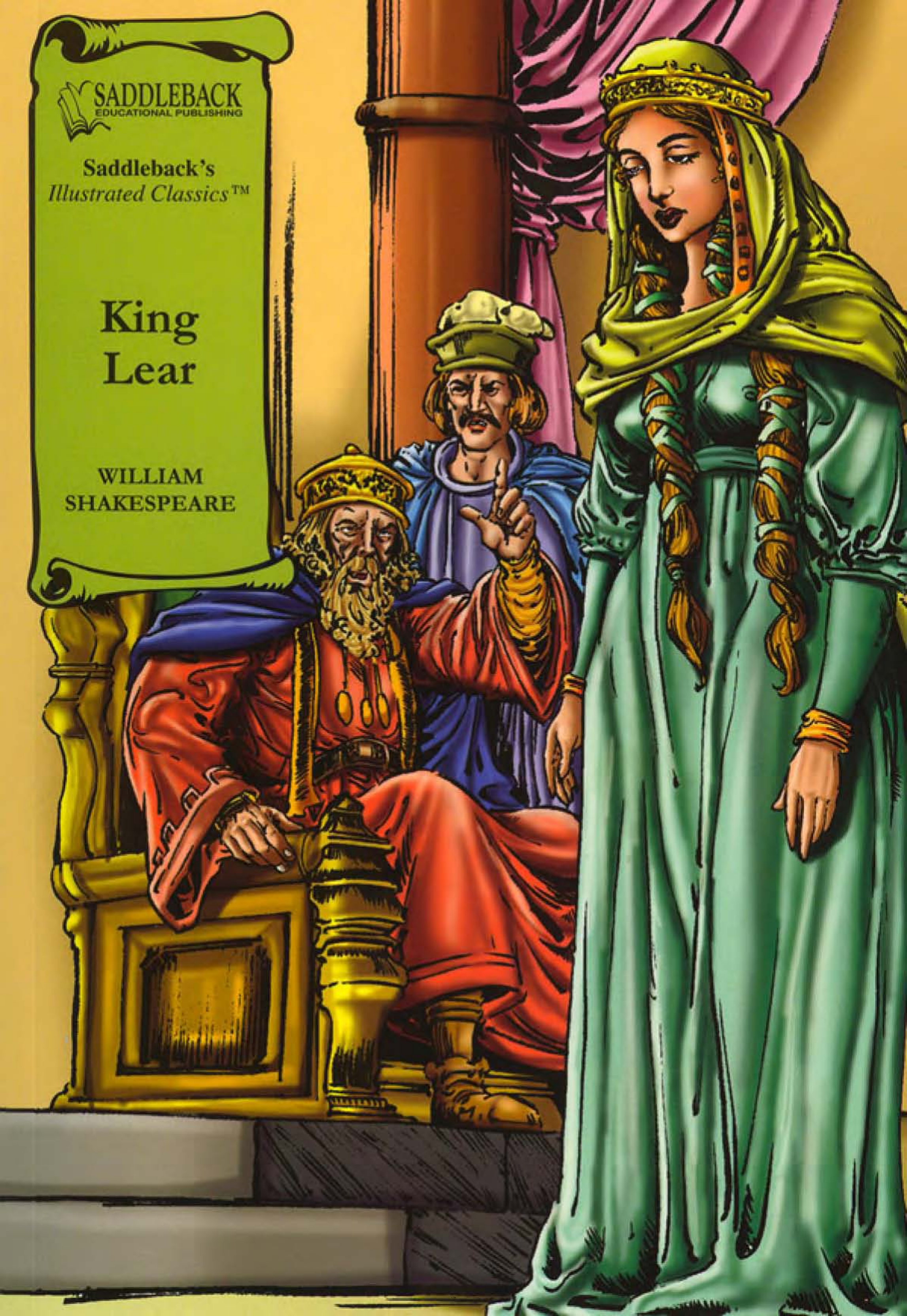
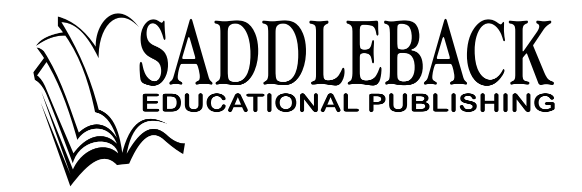


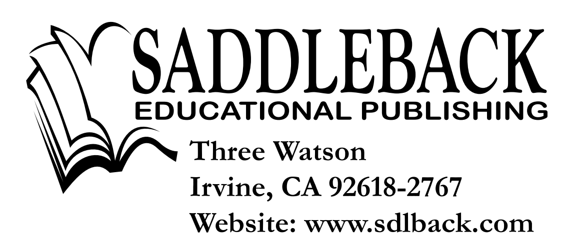
SADDLEBACK
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING
Saddleback's
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King
Lear
WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE

King Lear

William Shakespeare



Saddleback's *Illustrated Classics*™



ISBN 1-59905-149-4

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Overview

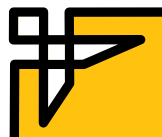
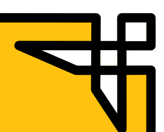
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Remember,

"Today's readers are tomorrow's leaders."

William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, in Stratford-on-Avon, England, the third child of John Shakespeare, a well-to-do merchant, and Mary Arden, his wife. Young William probably attended the Stratford grammar school, where he learned English, Greek, and a great deal of Latin. Historians aren't sure of the exact date of Shakespeare's birth.

In 1582, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. By 1583 the couple had a daughter, Susanna, and two years later the twins, Hamnet and Judith. Somewhere between 1585 and 1592 Shakespeare went to London, where he became first an actor and then a playwright. His acting company, *The King's Men*, appeared most often in the *Globe* theater, a part of which Shakespeare himself owned.

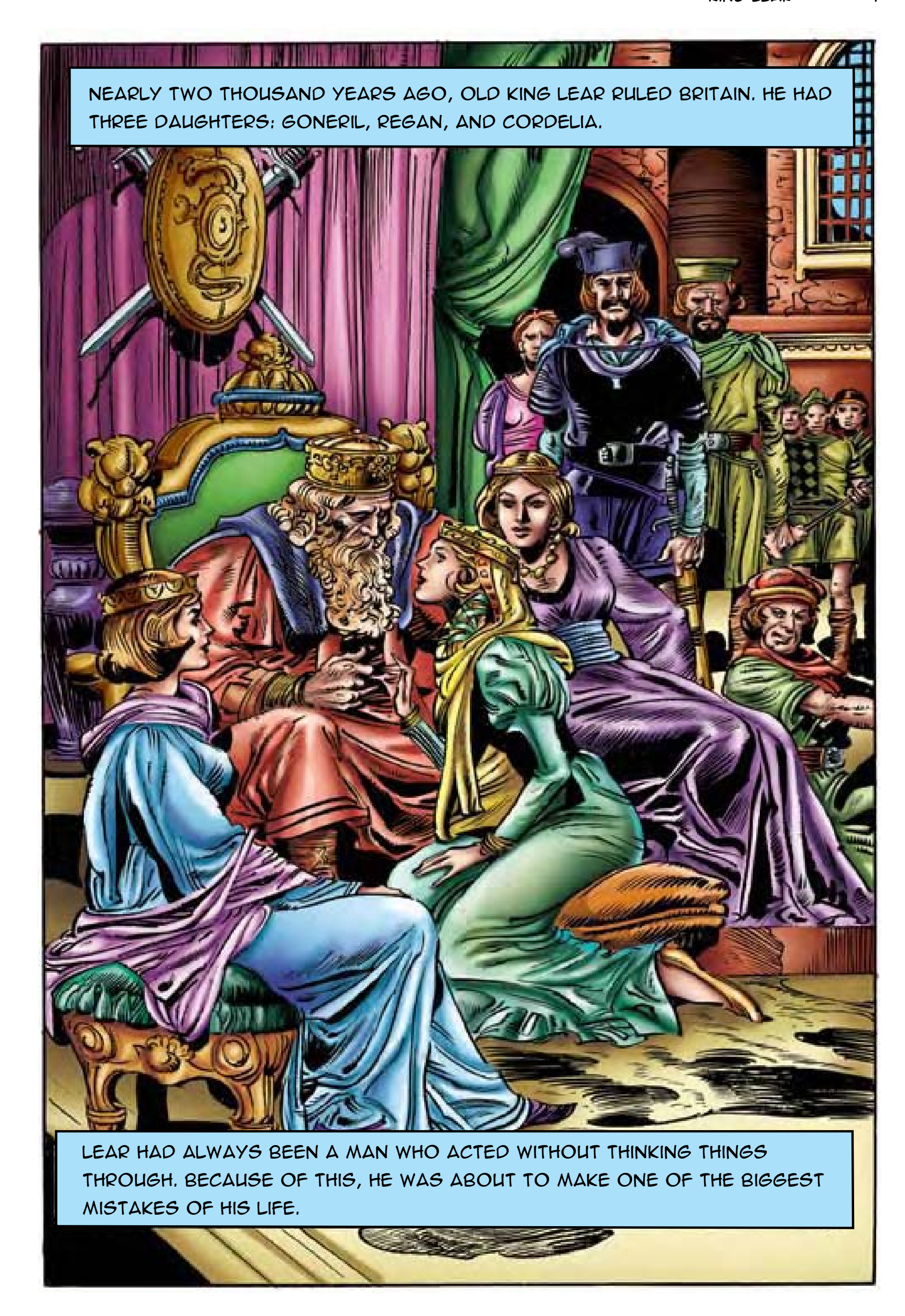
In all, Shakespeare is believed to have written thirty-seven plays, several nondramatic poems, and a number of sonnets. In 1611 when he left the active life of the theater, he returned to Stratford and became a country gentleman, living in the second-largest house in town. For five years he lived a quiet life. Then, on April 23, 1616, William Shakespeare died and was buried in Trinity Church in Stratford. From his own time to the present, Shakespeare is considered one of the greatest writers of the English-speaking world.




William Shakespeare

King Lear




NEARLY TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO, OLD KING LEAR RULED BRITAIN. HE HAD THREE DAUGHTERS: GONERIL, REGAN, AND CORDELIA.
LEAR HAD ALWAYS BEEN A MAN WHO ACTED WITHOUT THINKING THINGS THROUGH. BECAUSE OF THIS, HE WAS ABOUT TO MAKE ONE OF THE BIGGEST MISTAKES OF HIS LIFE.



* say that something is so









* according to the law

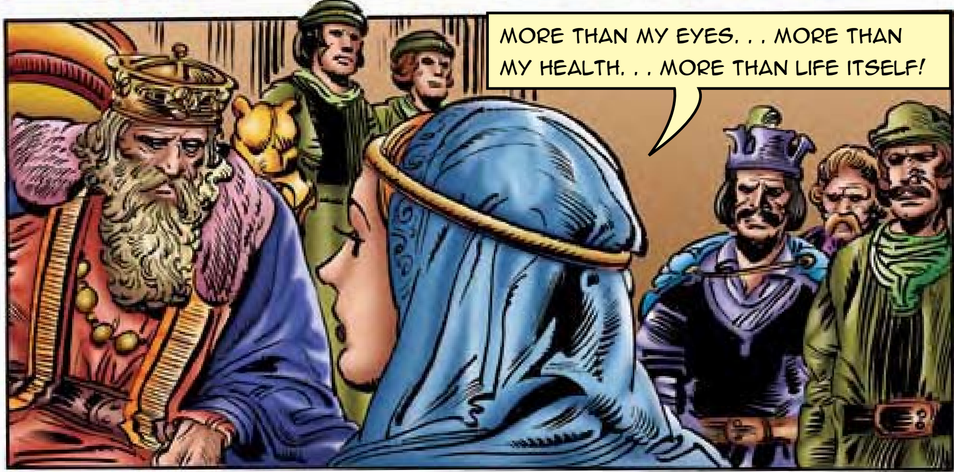
AT THE SOUND OF TRUMPETS, KING LEAR ENTERED WITH HIS COURT.





* a statement made before a group of people

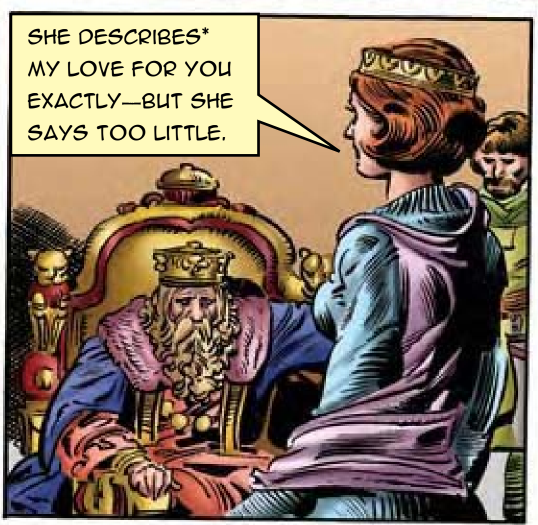

GONERIL, YOU ARE THE OLDEST. WHAT DO YOU SAY?
DEAR FATHER, I LOVE YOU MORE THAN WORDS CAN SAY!

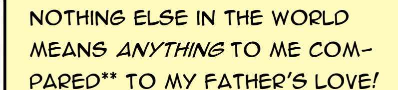

MORE THAN MY EYES. . . MORE THAN MY HEALTH. . . MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF!


I LOVE YOU AS MUCH AS ANY CHILD *EVER* LOVED A FATHER!











* explains, shows, tells about

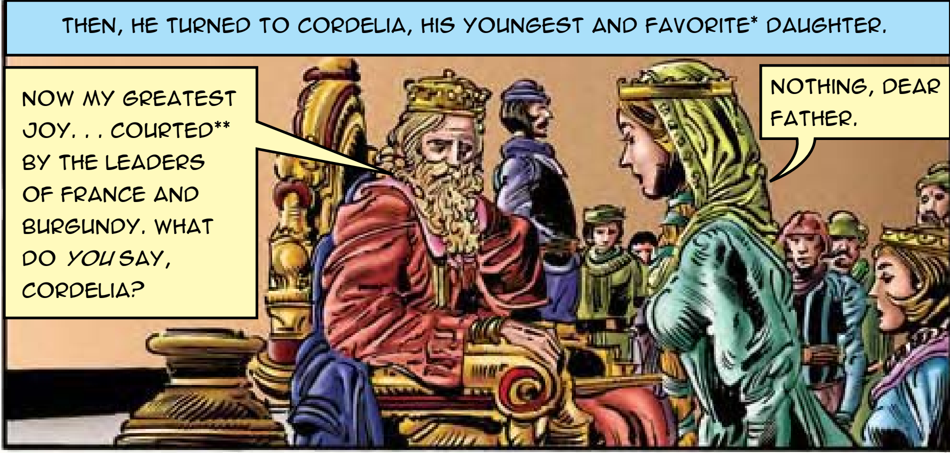
** showing how two things are alike or different

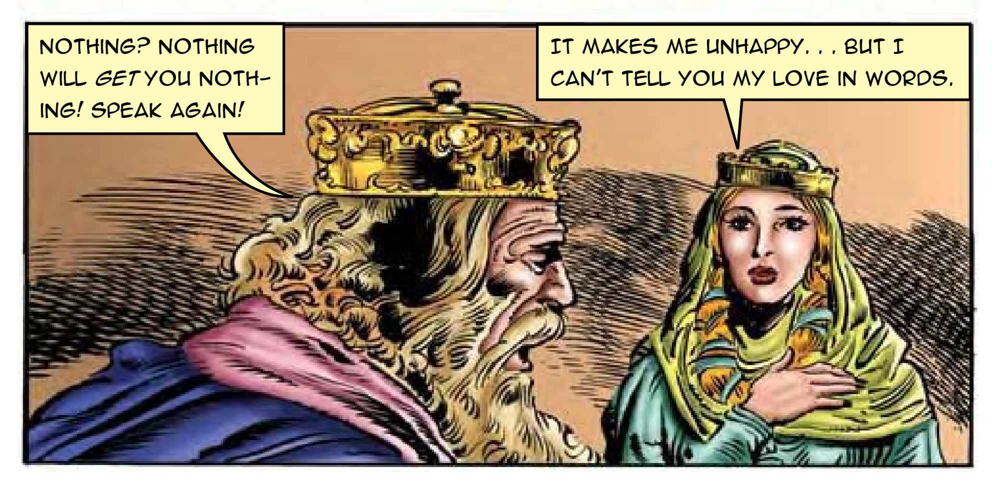


* make someone think he is better than he really is



THEN, HE TURNED TO CORDELIA, HIS YOUNGEST AND FAVORITE* DAUGHTER.





* best loved

** sought after in marriage


YOU'RE MY FATHER. YOU'VE RAISED ME AND LOVED ME. I OBEY YOU, LOVE YOU, AND HONOR* YOU.


I DON'T SEE HOW MY SISTERS CAN SAY THEY LOVE *ONLY* YOU. WHAT ABOUT THEIR HUSBANDS?


WHEN I MARRY, I SHALL GIVE MY HUSBAND HALF MY LOVE AND CARE.

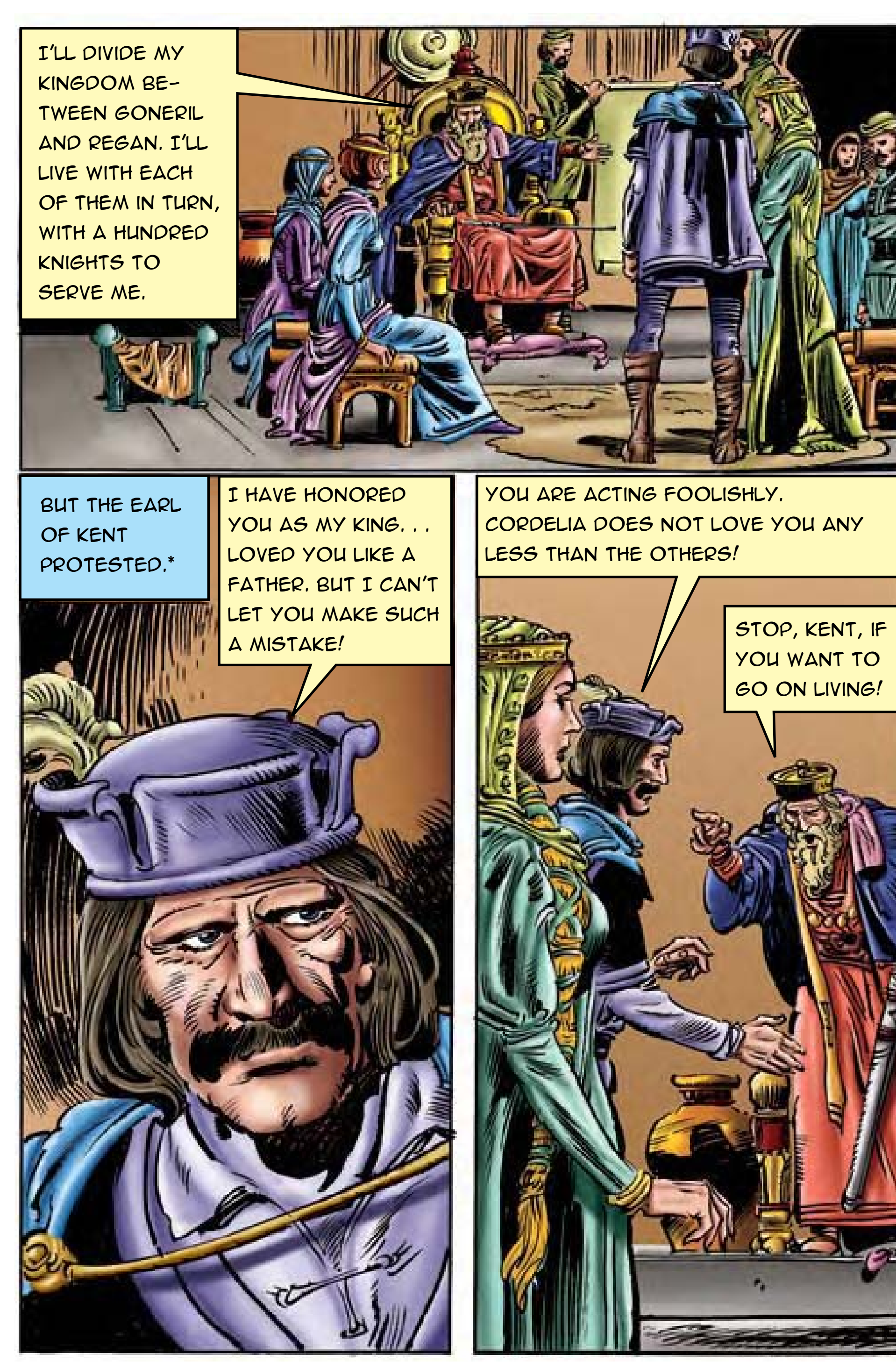

I CANNOT DO WHAT THEY SAY THEY DO.

* respect



* whatever a child receives at his parents' death

** have nothing more to do with

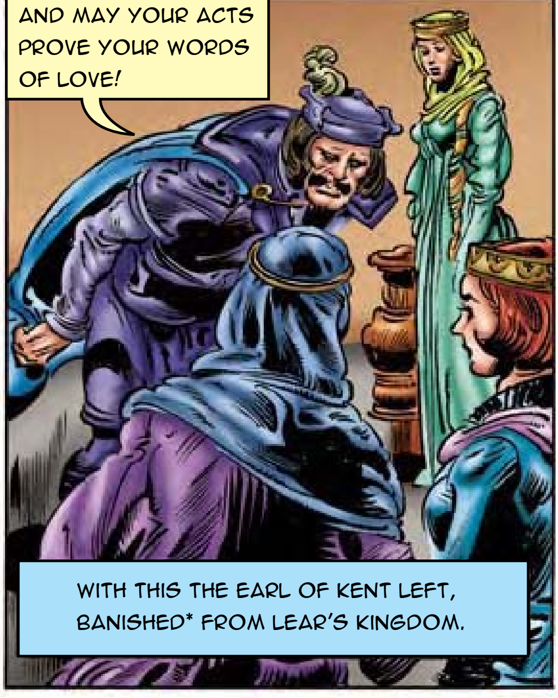


* objected, did not agree

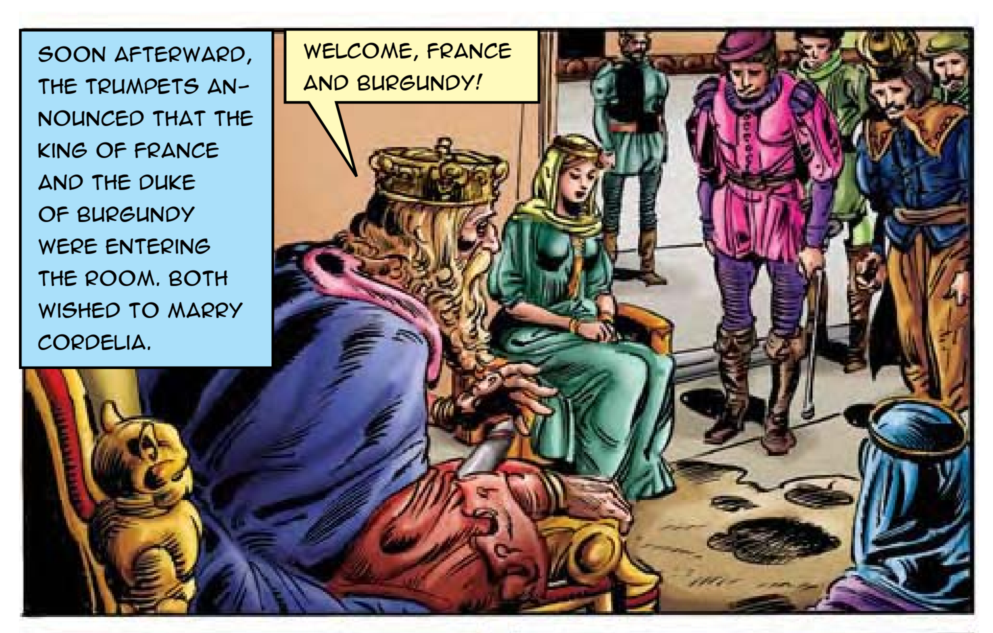








* sent away forever





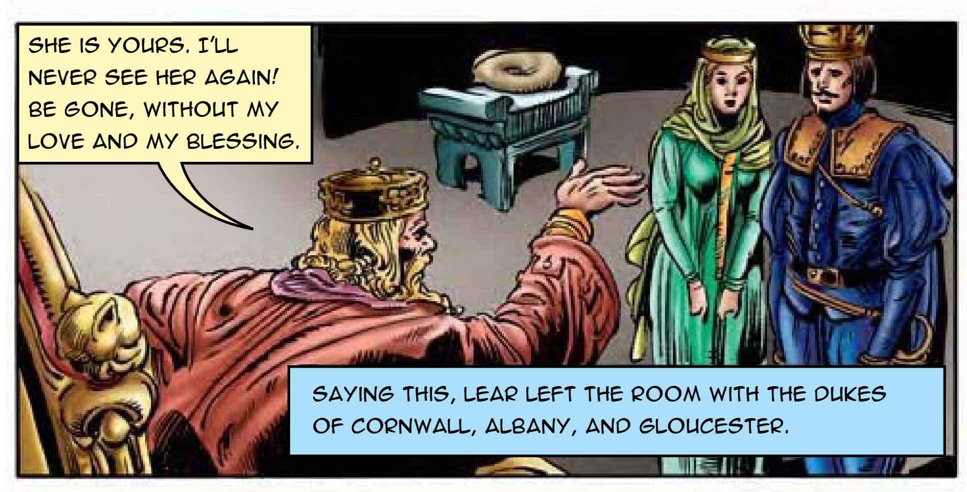


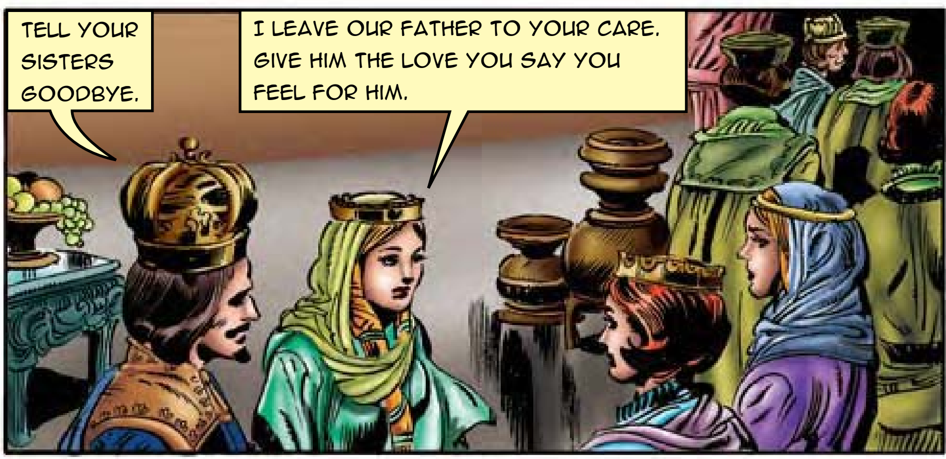
* money given to a daughter and her husband when she is married

AND YOU, GREAT KING! SINCE I NOW HATE MY DAUGHTER, YOU'D BEST LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR A WIFE!

ONLY BECAUSE YOU ARE ANGRY WITH HER? THAT MAKES ME LOVE HER MORE THAN EVER!

FAIR CORDELIA, I WILL MAKE YOU *MY* QUEEN AND THE QUEEN OF FRANCE! TELL THEM GOODBYE AND COME WITH ME!


SHE IS YOURS. I'LL NEVER SEE HER AGAIN! BE GONE, WITHOUT MY LOVE AND MY BLESSING.
SAYING THIS, LEAR LEFT THE ROOM WITH THE DUKES OF CORNWALL, ALBANY, AND GLOUCESTER.


TELL YOUR SISTERS GOODBYE.
I LEAVE OUR FATHER TO YOUR CARE. GIVE HIM THE LOVE YOU SAY YOU FEEL FOR HIM.


DON'T TELL US WHAT TO DO!
SINCE YOU NOW HAVE NOTHING, YOU'D BETTER THINK ABOUT PLEASING YOUR NEW HUSBAND!



* sent away

** a brother who shares only one parent with another brother or sister









* the act of remaining faithful in hard times









* believe someone to be different from what he really is



SOON AFTERWARD, EDGAR ENTERED THE ROOM.

HELLO, BROTHER EDMUND!

WHEN DID YOU SPEAK WITH OUR FATHER LAST?

TWO HOURS AGO. WHY?

WAS HE ANGRY WITH YOU AT ALL?

NO, OF COURSE NOT!

WELL, HE IS ANGRY WITH YOU NOW! YOU MUST KEEP OUT OF HIS WAY!









* good and honest

** thinking evil of someone

IT WAS SEVERAL DAYS LATER. KING LEAR AND HIS KNIGHTS WERE STAYING WITH GONERIL AND THE DUKE OF ALBANY. GONERIL SPOKE WITH OSWALD, HER SERVANT.

MY FATHER IS OLD AND FOOLISH. HE GAVE AWAY HIS POWERS, BUT HE STILL TRIES TO GIVE ORDERS. I WON'T STAND FOR IT!







MEANWHILE THE EARL OF KENT, DISGUISED* AS A STRANGER, ARRIVED AT GONERIL'S HOME. HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE OLD KING AND WANTED TO BE NEAR HIM.



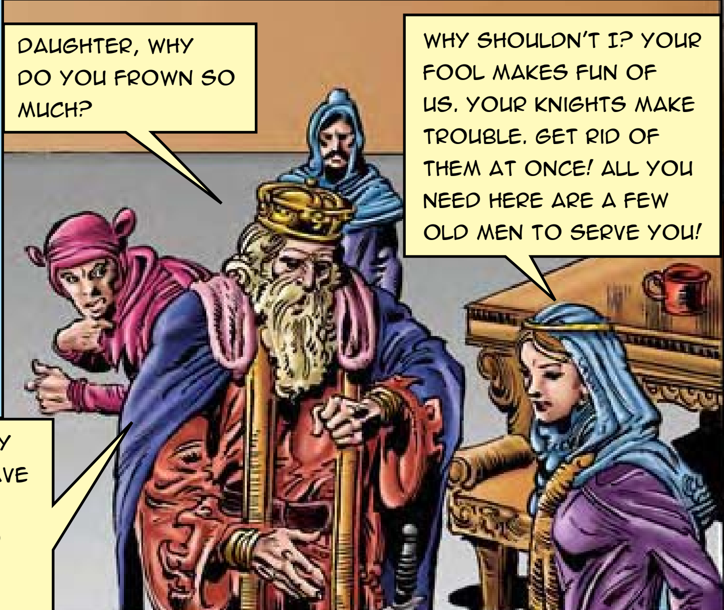




* dressed to look like someone else

AT THAT MOMENT, THE SERVANT OSWALD ENTERED THE ROOM. BUT INSTEAD OF SERVING THE KING, HE WALKED AWAY AGAIN. LEAR BEGAN TO SEE THAT GONERIL AND HER SERVANTS HAD NO RESPECT FOR HIS WISHES.

WHENEVER HE SAW HIS OLDEST DAUGHTER, SHE LOOKED ANGRY. ONE DAY HE COULD TAKE IT NO LONGER.





WHILE ALL THIS WAS HAPPENING, EDMUND CONTINUED TO PLOT AGAINST EDGAR.



FATHER'S COMING. QUICK, DRAW YOUR SWORD! I MUST PRETEND TO FIGHT YOU!

NOW GET AWAY, BROTHER, QUICKLY. . . OR THEY'LL CATCH YOU!

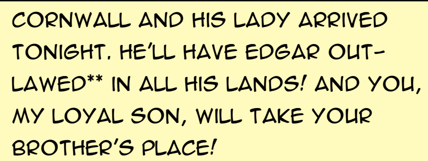
I'LL STAB MY-SELF—PRETEND THAT EDGAR HAS HURT ME!







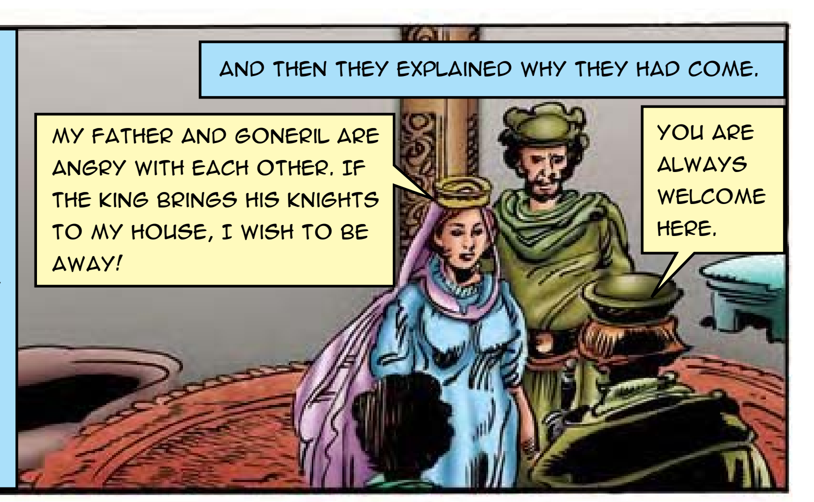




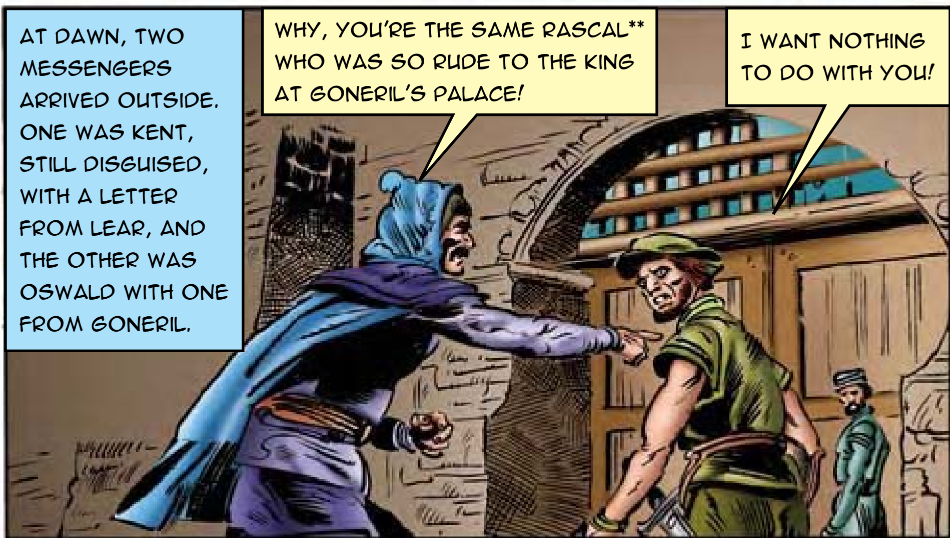


* injured, cut

** hunted as a criminal



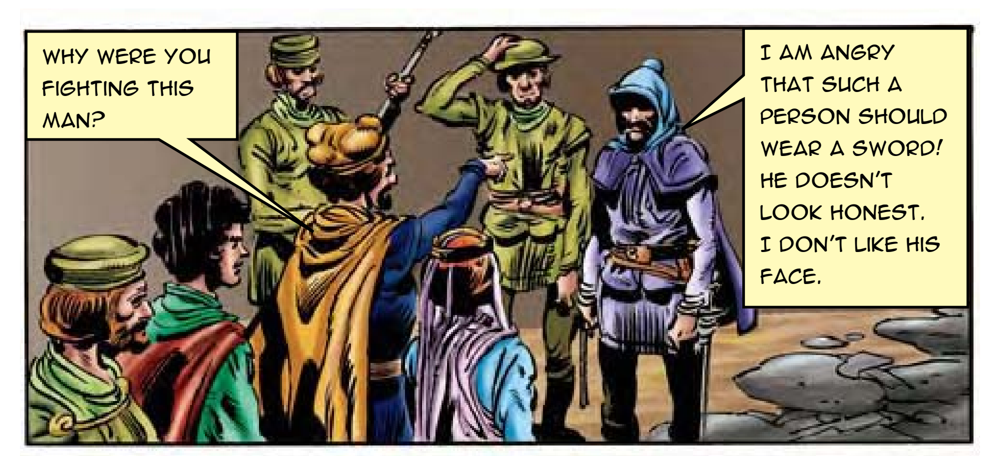




* help

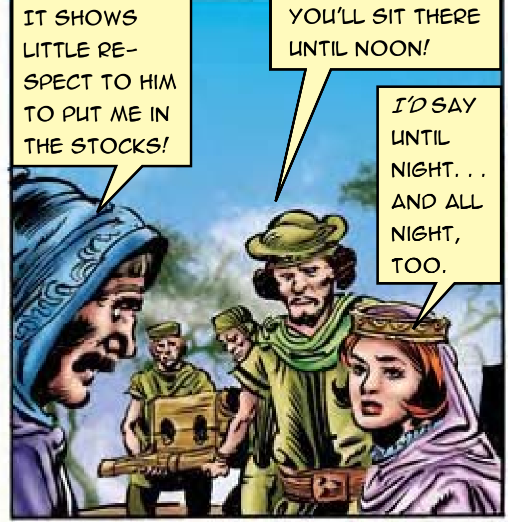
** dishonest person


I SUPPOSE YOU CARRY LETTERS AGAINST THE KING, TAKING GONER-IL'S SIDE. DRAW YOUR SWORD!
NO! HELP! LEAVE ME ALONE!
IF YOU WON'T FIGHT, I'LL BEAT YOU! TAKE THAT!
HELP! HELP! MURDER!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
PEACE! STOP AT ONCE!
IT'S THE MESSENGERS FROM GONERIL AND THE KING.





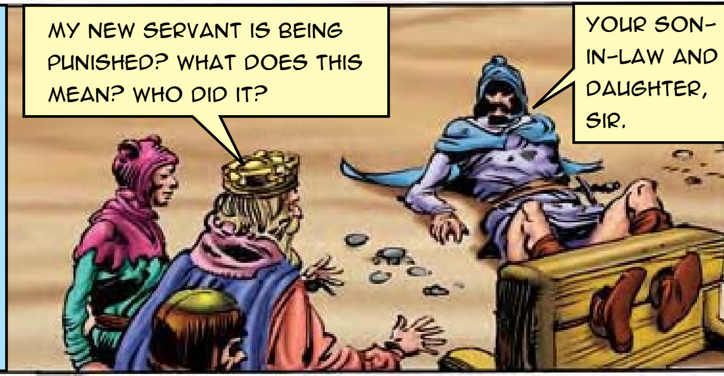




* a wooden frame in which a person to be punished must sit for a certain time



WHILE KENT HAD BEEN LEFT IN THE STOCKS, KING LEAR ARRIVED AT REGAN'S CASTLE. FINDING HER GONE, HE WENT TO GLOUCESTER'S.





SEEING THE KING, GLOUCESTER RUSHED OUTSIDE TO GREET HIM.

WHERE IS MY DAUGHTER AND HER HUSBAND?

THEY KNOW YOU ARE HERE. . . THEY ARE TIRED. BE PATIENT! THEY WILL SEE YOU LATER.


AT LAST REGAN CAME TO HER FATHER.
I AM GLAD TO SEE YOU, DEAR FATHER.
OH, REGAN. . . I HOPE SO! YOUR SISTER HAS BEEN SO UNKIND. YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT!


I DON'T BELIEVE SHE WOULD DO LESS THAN HER DUTY TO YOU. IF SHE SAID THAT YOUR KNIGHTS WERE MAK-ING TROUBLE, IT WAS WITH GOOD REASON!
WHAT?

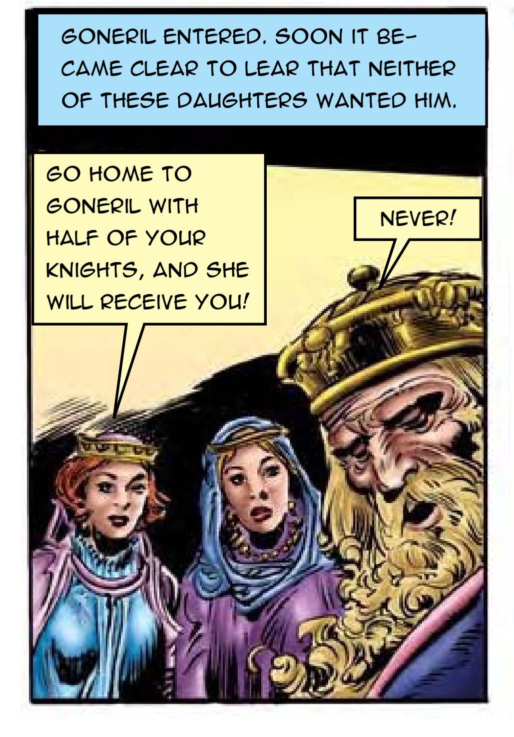

SIR, YOU ARE OLD! YOU MUST BE GUIDED BY OTHERS. GO BACK TO MY SISTER. TELL HER YOU WERE WRONG.


WHAT? ASK HER TO FORGIVE ME? SHOULD I GO ON MY KNEES TO HER?


SHOULD I SAY, "DEAR DAUGH-TER, FORGIVE ME FOR BEING OLD. I BEG YOU FOR FOOD, BED AND CLOTHING!"


GET UP! YOU MUST NOT ACT THAT WAY!


JUST THEN A TRUMPET SOUNDED.
WHOSE TRUMPET CALL IS THAT?
MY SISTER'S! SHE SAID SHE WOULD SOON BE HERE.
I WON'T GO BACK TO HER!


GONERIL ENTERED. SOON IT BECAME CLEAR TO LEAR THAT NEITHER OF THESE DAUGHTERS WANTED HIM.
GO HOME TO GONERIL WITH HALF OF YOUR KNIGHTS, AND SHE WILL RECEIVE YOU!
NEVER!

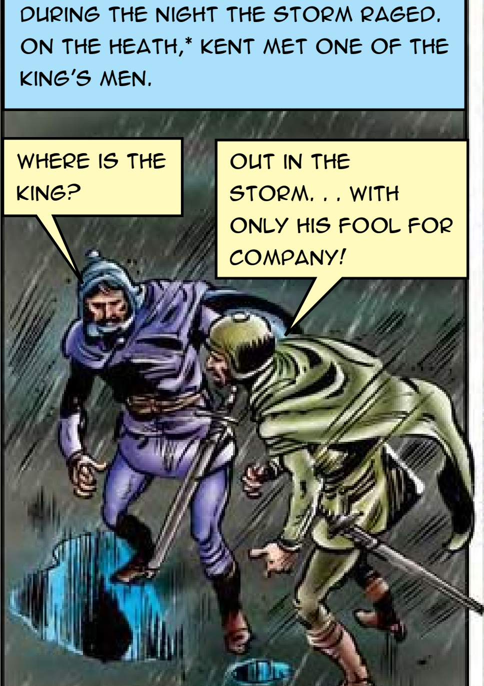

OR COME TO ME, WITH ONLY TWENTY-FIVE KNIGHTS. YOU DON'T NEED SO MANY.
OR WHY EVEN *ONE* KNIGHT? OUR SERVANTS WILL WAIT ON YOU.
OH, HEAVENS, HELP ME! I MUST NOT GO MAD FROM ANGER AND OLD AGE!

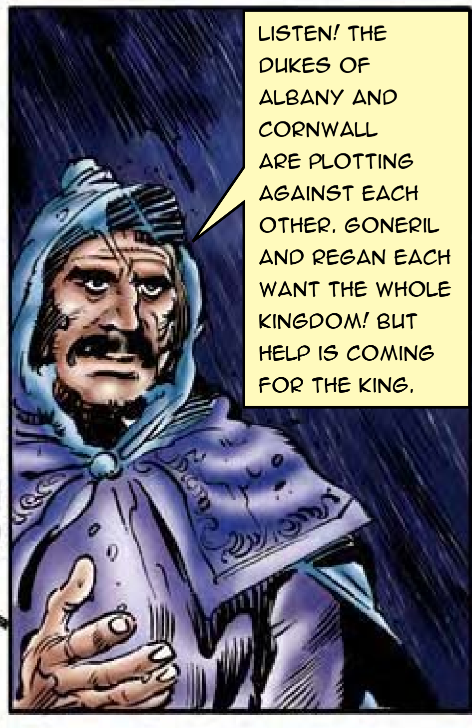




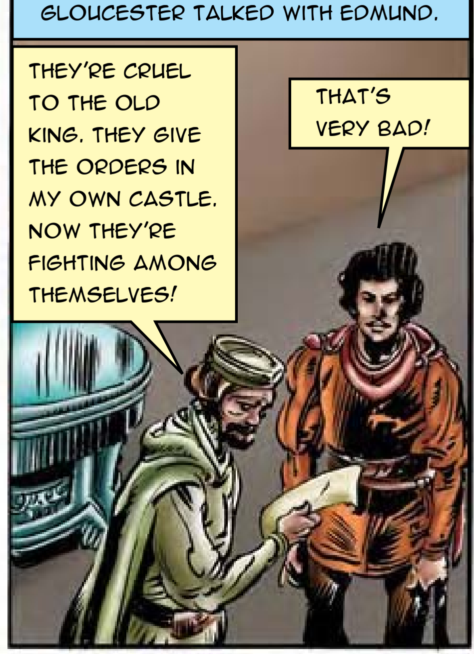


* getting even with someone



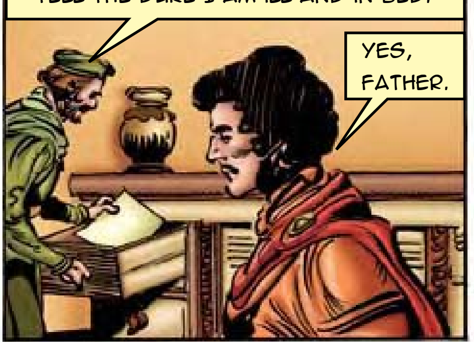


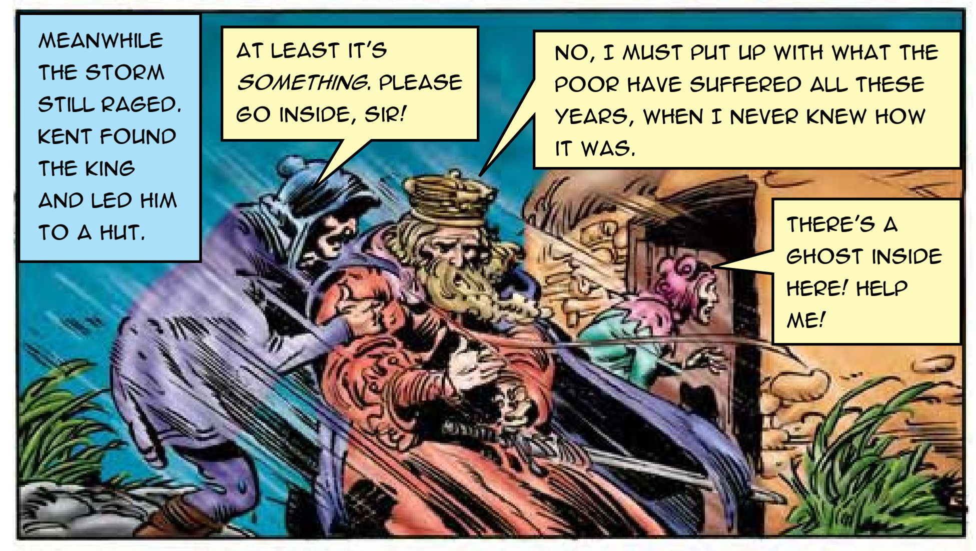




* a wild, marshy area


AND I'VE JUST HEARD THAT A FRENCH ARMY IS COMING TO HELP THE KING. I AM ON THE OLD KING'S SIDE IF I DIE FOR IT!

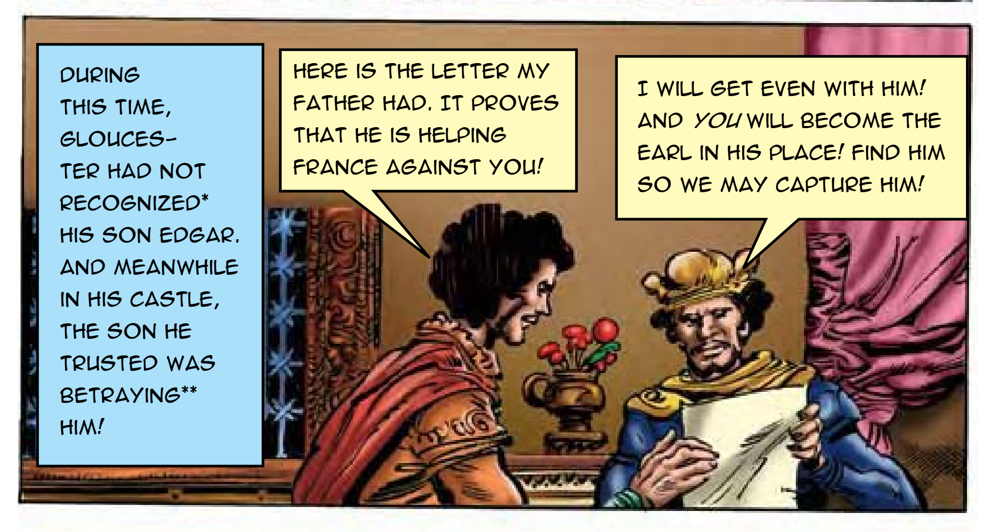

IT'S DANGEROUS, BUT I MUST GO AND FIND THE KING AND HELP HIM. TELL THE DUKE I AM ILL AND IN BED.
YES, FATHER.


MEANWHILE THE STORM STILL RAGED. KENT FOUND THE KING AND LED HIM TO A HUT.
AT LEAST IT'S *SOMETHING*. PLEASE GO INSIDE, SIR!
NO, I MUST PUT UP WITH WHAT THE POOR HAVE SUFFERED ALL THESE YEARS, WHEN I NEVER KNEW HOW IT WAS.
THERE'S A GHOST INSIDE HERE! HELP ME!


THE "GHOST" WAS EDGAR. TO ESCAPE, HE HAS DISGUISED HIMSELF AS A MAD BEGGAR.
GO AWAY!
HAVE *HIS* DAUGHTERS BROUGHT HIM TO THIS SAD STATE?

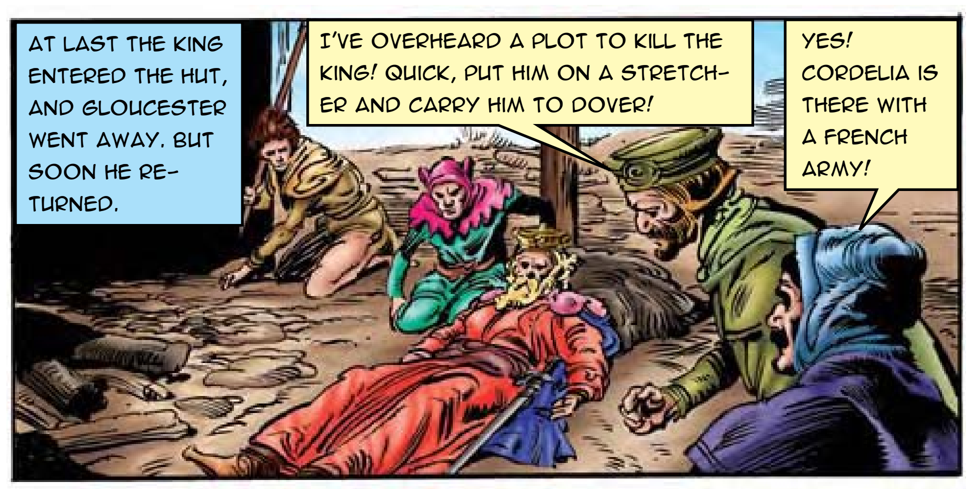


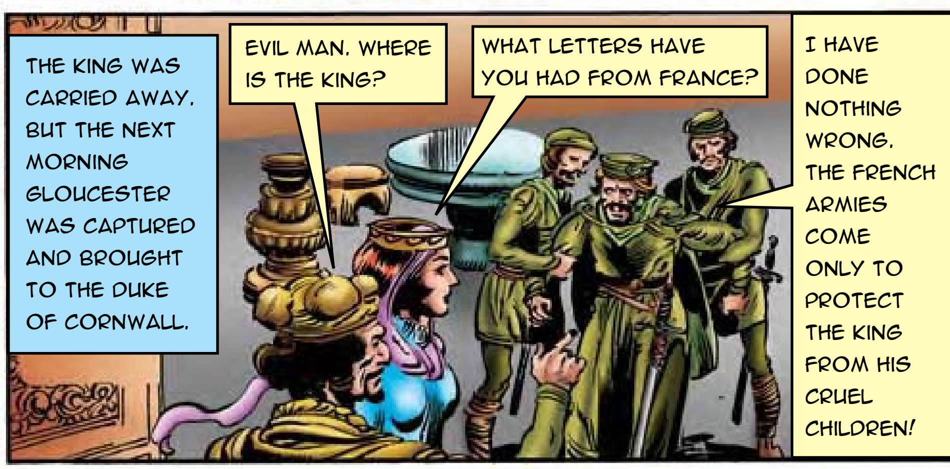




* knew from seeing someone before

** doing evil to someone who trusts him


AT LAST THE KING ENTERED THE HUT, AND GLOUCESTER WENT AWAY. BUT SOON HE RE-TURNED.
I'VE OVERHEARD A PLOT TO KILL THE KING! QUICK, PUT HIM ON A STRETCH-ER AND CARRY HIM TO DOVER!
YES! CORDELIA IS THERE WITH A FRENCH ARMY!

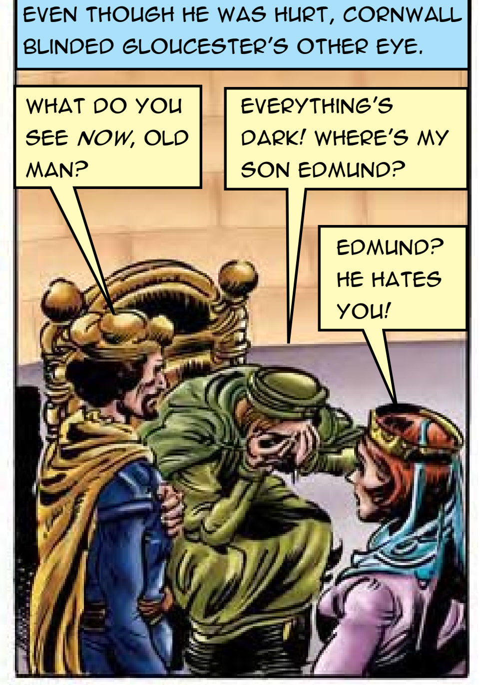

THE KING WAS CARRIED AWAY. BUT THE NEXT MORNING GLOUCESTER WAS CAPTURED AND BROUGHT TO THE DUKE OF CORNWALL.
EVIL MAN. WHERE IS THE KING?
WHAT LETTERS HAVE YOU HAD FROM FRANCE?
I HAVE DONE NOTHING WRONG. THE FRENCH ARMIES COME ONLY TO PROTECT THE KING FROM HIS CRUEL CHILDREN!


I SHALL SEE REVENGE FROM HEAVEN OVERTAKE SUCH CHIL-DREN!
YOU'LL NEVER SEE IT! YOU'LL HAVE NO EYES!
SCRATCH THEM OUT.
IN A MOMENT CORNWALL HAD BLINDED GLOUCESTER IN ONE EYE.





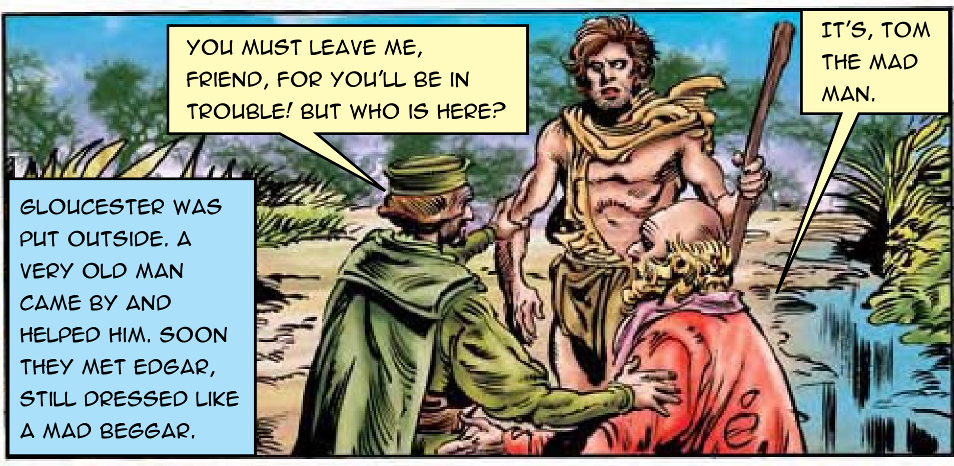


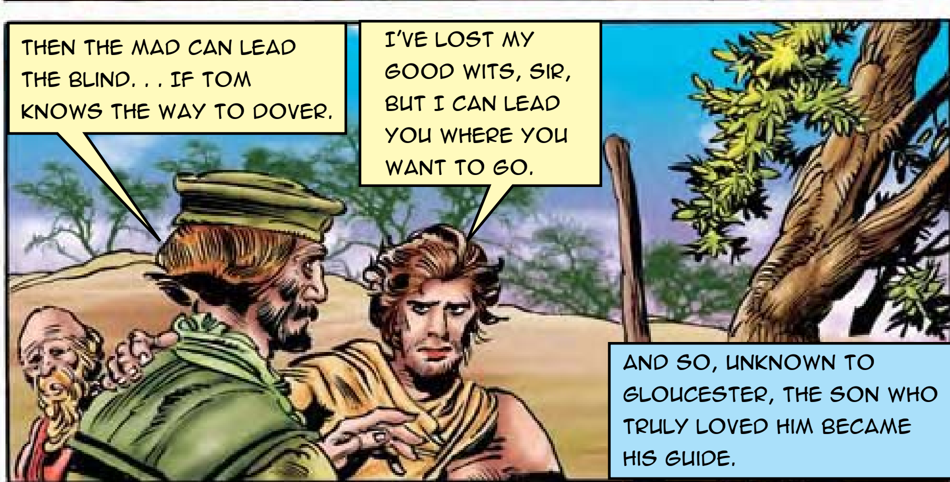


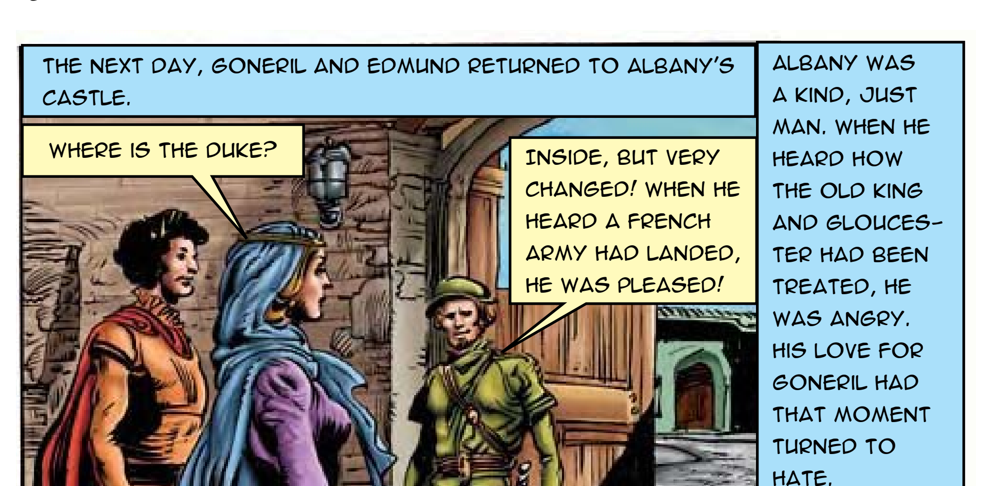
* a person of low class


IT WAS ED-MUND WHO SHOWED US THE LETTER YOU HAD!
THEN EDGAR HAS BEEN TRUE TO ME!

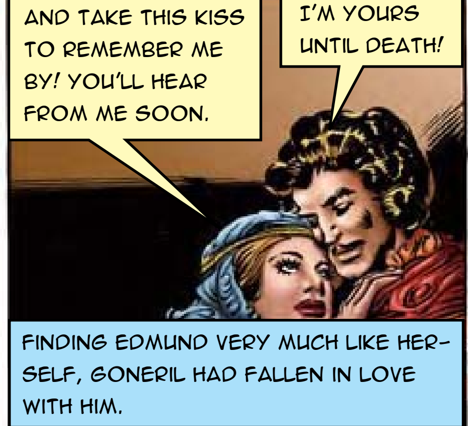

PUT GLOUCESTER OUTSIDE THE GATES. LET HIM SMELL HIS WAY TO DOVER.
HELP ME REGAN. I'M BADLY HURT!

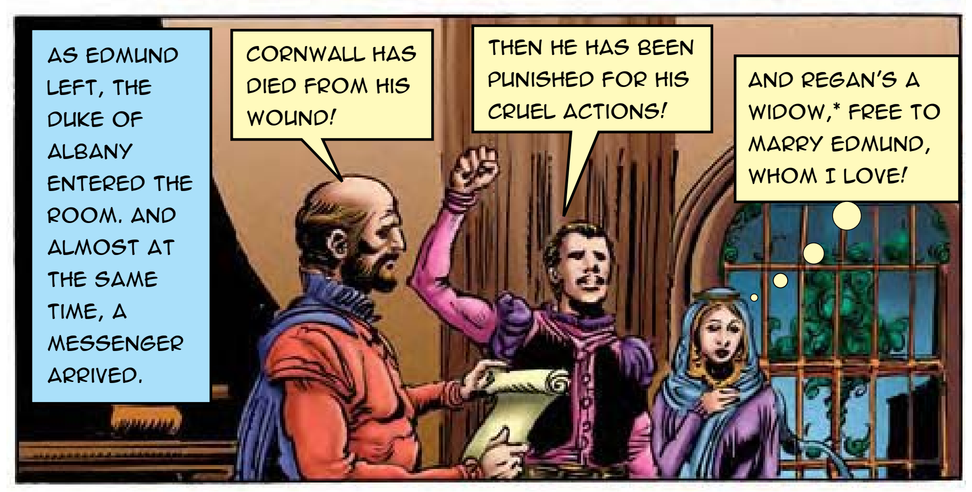

GLOUCESTER WAS PUT OUTSIDE. A VERY OLD MAN CAME BY AND HELPED HIM. SOON THEY MET EDGAR, STILL DRESSED LIKE A MAD BEGGAR.
YOU MUST LEAVE ME, FRIEND, FOR YOU'LL BE IN TROUBLE! BUT WHO IS HERE?
IT'S, TOM THE MAD MAN.


THEN THE MAD CAN LEAD THE BLIND. . . IF TOM KNOWS THE WAY TO DOVER.
I'VE LOST MY GOOD WITS, SIR, BUT I CAN LEAD YOU WHERE YOU WANT TO GO.
AND SO, UNKNOWN TO GLOUCESTER, THE SON WHO TRULY LOVED HIM BECAME HIS GUIDE.

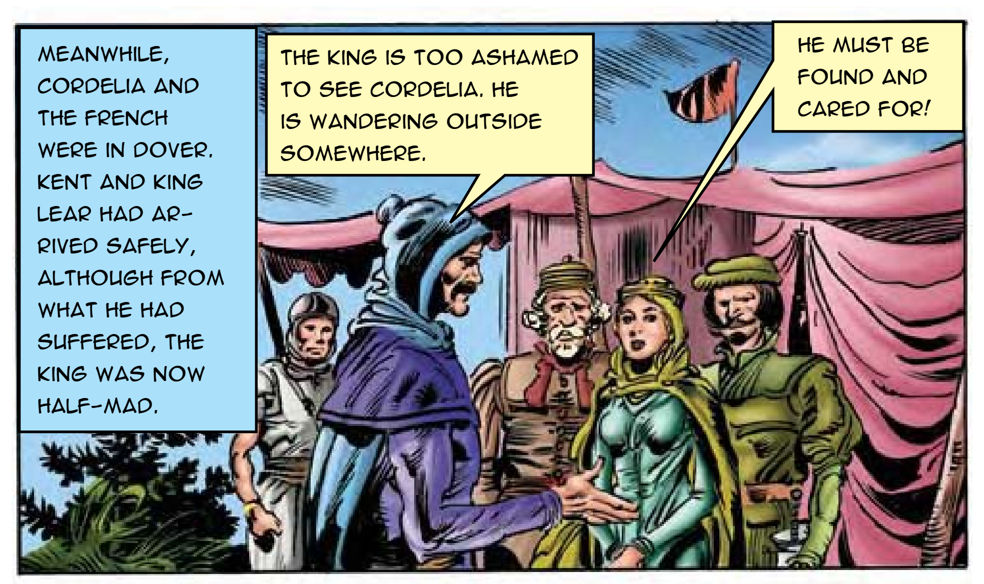








* a woman whose husband has died

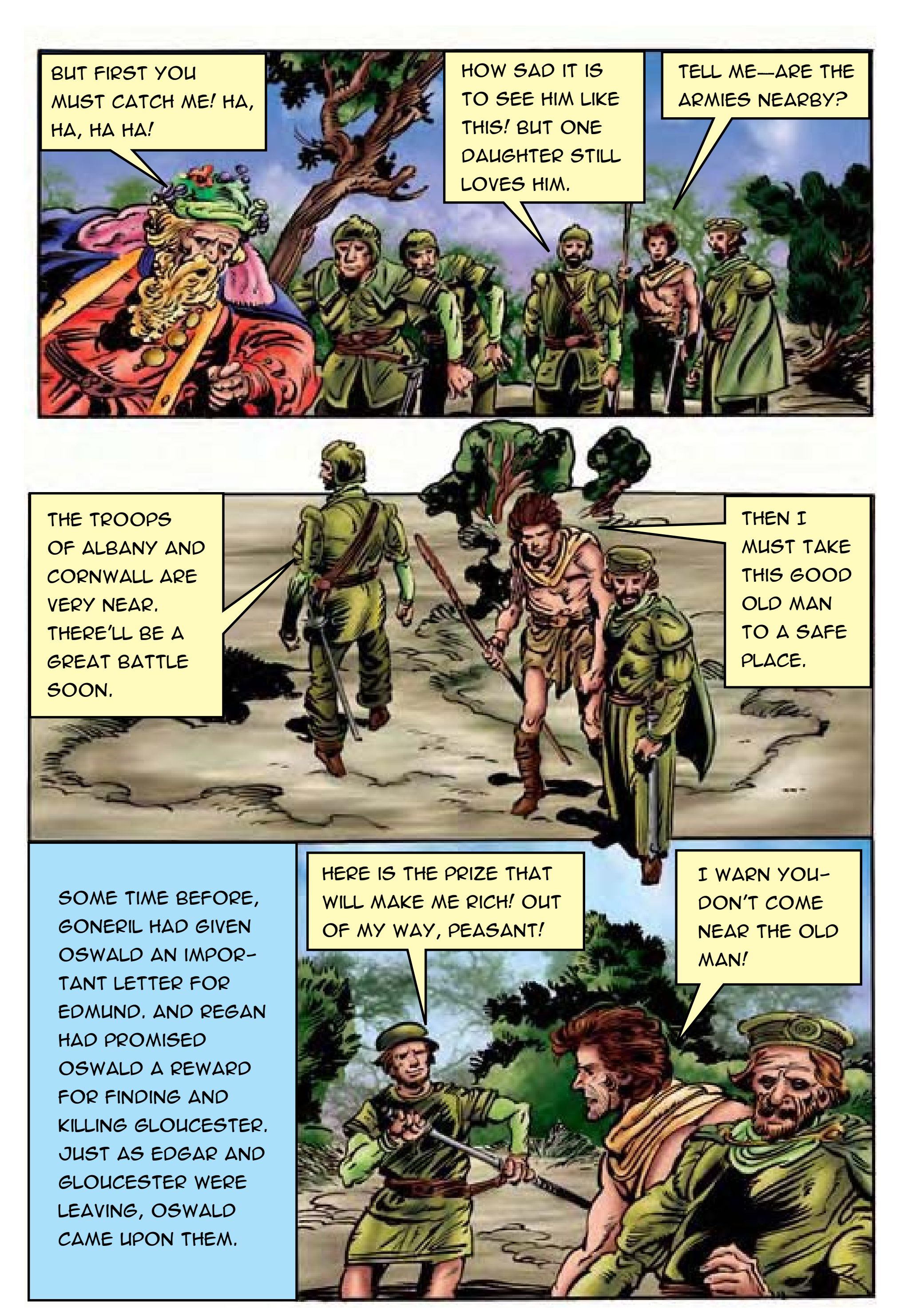

MEANWHILE, CORDELIA AND THE FRENCH WERE IN DOVER. KENT AND KING LEAR HAD ARRIVED SAFELY, ALTHOUGH FROM WHAT HE HAD SUFFERED, THE KING WAS NOW HALF-MAD.
THE KING IS TOO ASHAMED TO SEE CORDELIA. HE IS WANDERING OUTSIDE SOMEWHERE.
HE MUST BE FOUND AND CARED FOR!

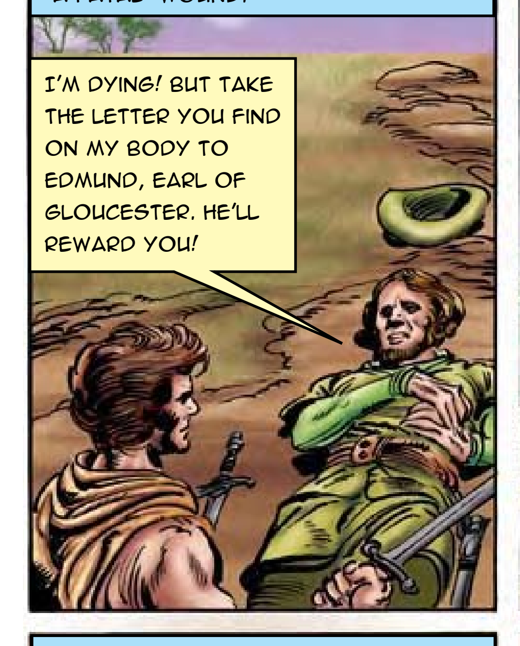

AT THE SAME TIME, EDGAR AND GLOUCESTER HAD ALSO ARRIVED IN DOVER.
GOOD MADMAN, ARE WE ON THE EDGE OF THE HIGH CLIFF I SPOKE ABOUT BEFORE?
WE ARE! IT MAKES ME DIZZY TO LOOK DOWN!
BUT KNOWING THAT HIS FATHER WOULD TRY TO KILL HIMSELF, EDGAR HAD BROUGHT HIM TO A FLAT PLACE INSTEAD.

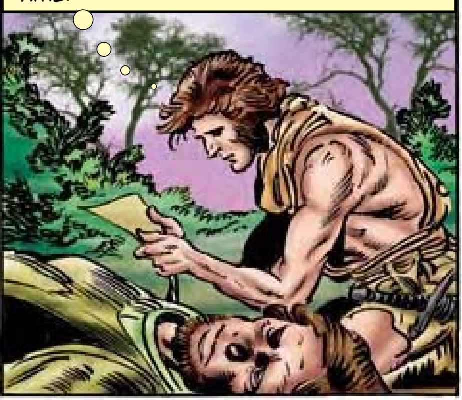

I WILL LIVE NO LONGER! IF EDGAR IS STILL ALIVE, MAY HE BE BLESSED!
AND BELIEVING HE WAS ON A HIGH CLIFF, GLOUCESTER JUMPED.

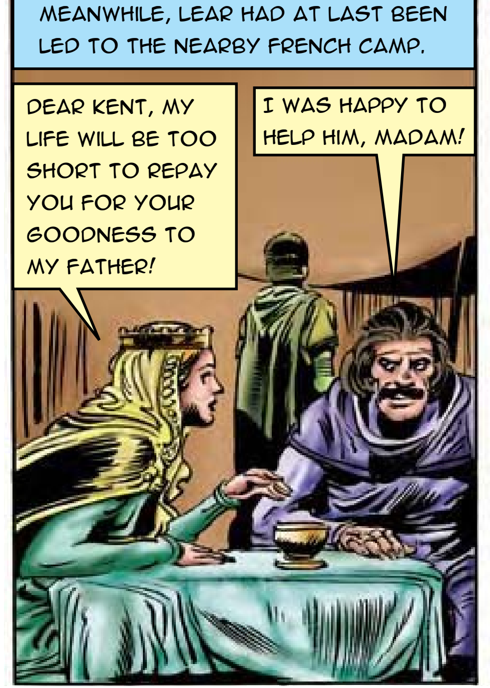


* a wonderful happening that can't be explained or understood


BUT FIRST YOU MUST CATCH ME! HA, HA, HA HA!
HOW SAD IT IS TO SEE HIM LIKE THIS! BUT ONE DAUGHTER STILL LOVES HIM.
TELL ME—ARE THE ARMIES NEARBY?
THE TROOPS OF ALBANY AND CORNWALL ARE VERY NEAR. THERE'LL BE A GREAT BATTLE SOON.
THEN I MUST TAKE THIS GOOD OLD MAN TO A SAFE PLACE.
SOME TIME BEFORE, GONERIL HAD GIVEN OSWALD AN IMPORTANT LETTER FOR EDMUND. AND REGAN HAD PROMISED OSWALD A REWARD FOR FINDING AND KILLING GLOUCESTER. JUST AS EDGAR AND GLOUCESTER WERE LEAVING, OSWALD CAME UPON THEM.
HERE IS THE PRIZE THAT WILL MAKE ME RICH! OUT OF MY WAY, PEASANT!
I WARN YOU—DON'T COME NEAR THE OLD MAN!









* leading to death



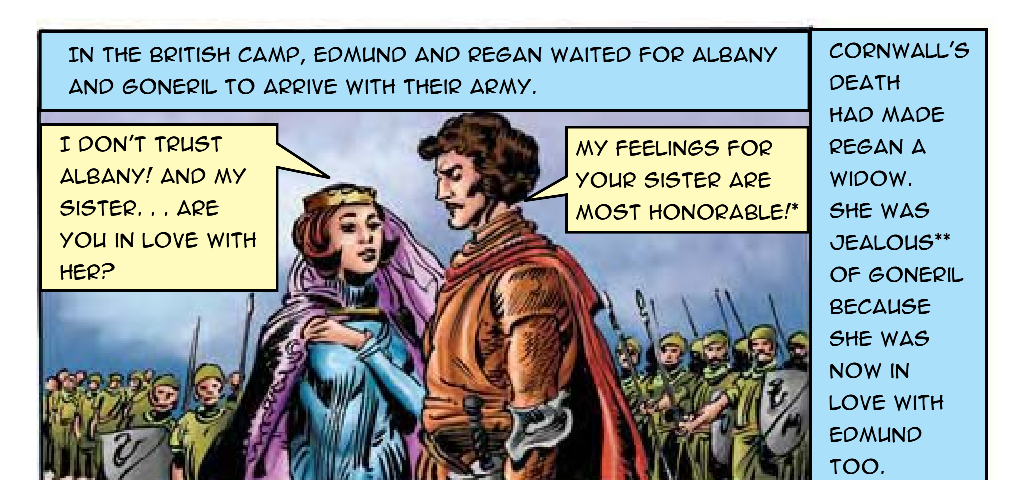
I SHOULD KNOW YOU AND THIS MAN. DON'T LAUGH. . . I THINK YOU ARE MY CHILD, CORDELIA.

DON'T CRY! I KNOW YOU CAN'T LOVE ME. . . I GAVE YOU CAUSE TO *HATE* ME!

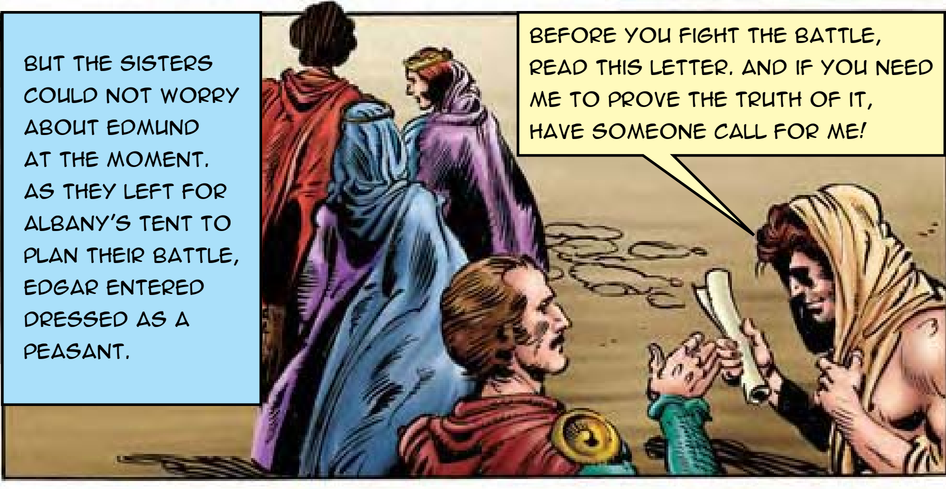
NO CAUSE, SIR! I *DO* LOVE YOU!

HIS MADNESS IS GONE. HE IS MUCH BETTER. NOW HE SHOULD REST.

COME WITH ME, FATHER.







* correct, the way something is supposed to be

** wanting what someone else has





BOTH SISTERS LOVE ME AND ARE JEALOUS. REGAN IS ALREADY A WIDOW, BUT ALBANY MAY DIE IN BATTLE! WHICH ONE SHALL I CHOOSE?



WELL IN ANY CASE, LEAR AND CORDE-LIA MUST DIE, EVEN THOUGH ALBANY WILL PROTECT THEM.

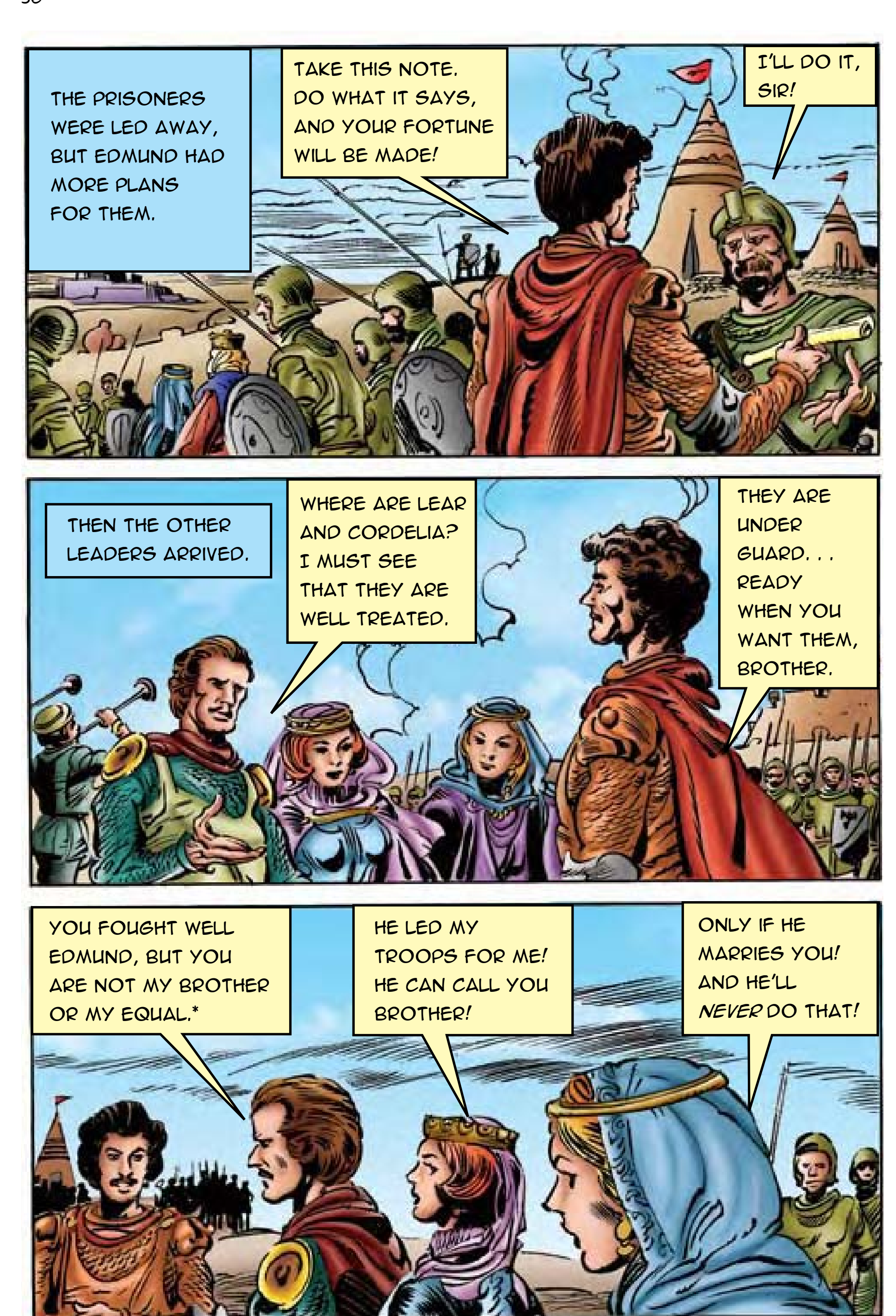
SOON THE ARMIES MET IN BATTLE. IN A SHORT TIME EVERYTHING WAS OVER, AND EDGAR RUSHED BACK TO GLOUCESTER.

COME QUICK. . . I'LL LEAD YOU TO SAFETY! THE FRENCH ARE BEATEN! CORDELIA AND LEAR ARE CAPTURED!

IN THE BRITISH CAMP, EDMUND WAS IN CHARGE.

TAKE THEM AWAY TO PRISON!

COME! WE TWO WILL LIVE LIKE BIRDS IN A CAGE TOGETHER!



* someone of the same class







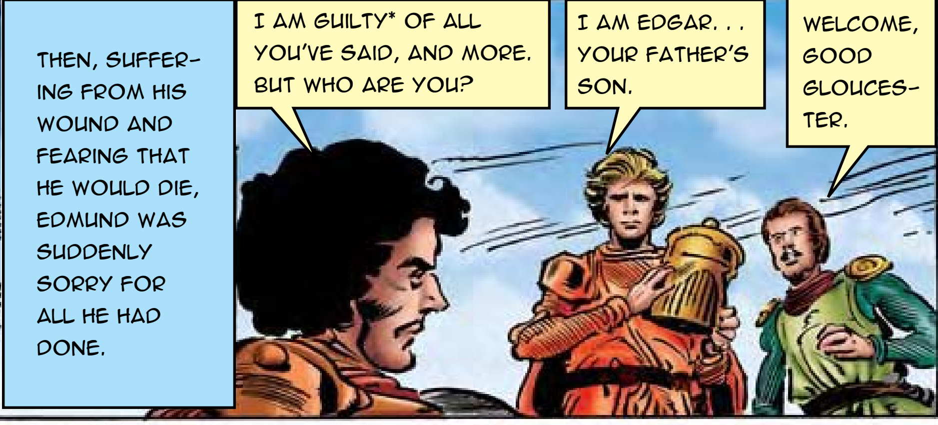


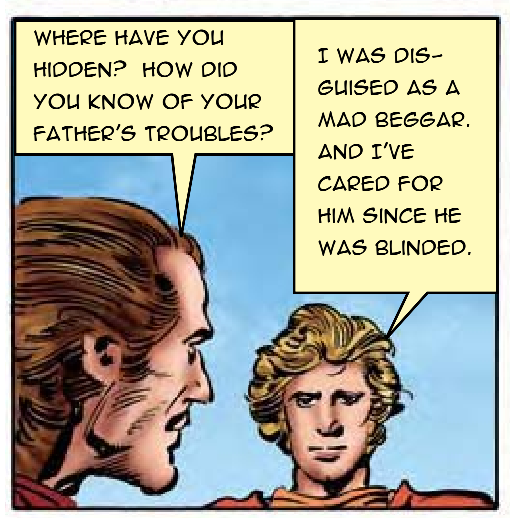
* acting against one's own country



* made necessary





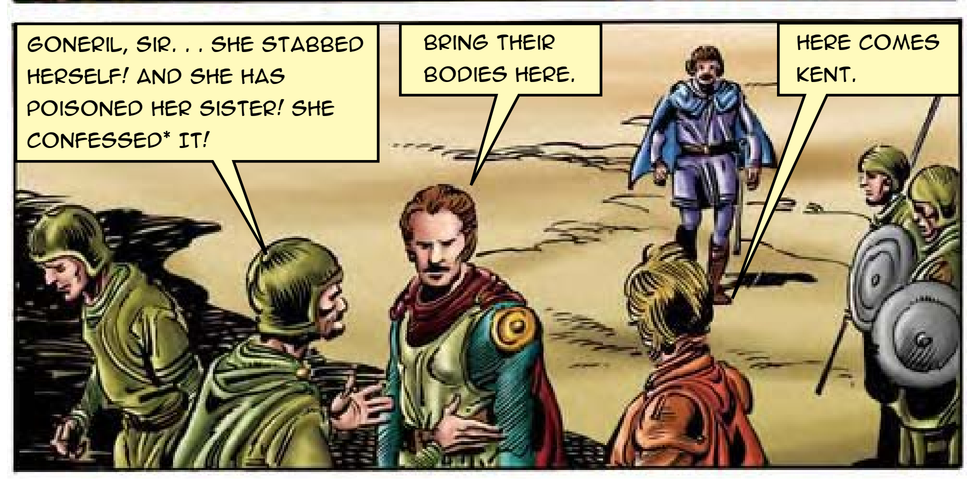




* having done something wrong

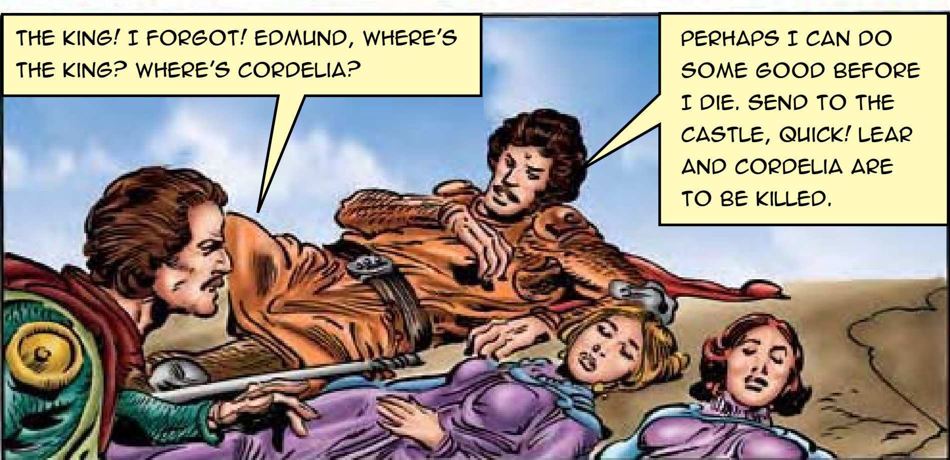

BUT JUST BEFORE, ANOTHER MAN CAME IN AND HUGGED MY FATHER. IT WAS KENT!
AND WHERE HAS *HE* BEEN?
HE HAS FOLLOWED THE KING IN DISGUISE AND SERVED HIM.


JUST THEN A SERVANT RUSHED IN.
HELP! HELP! SHE'S DEAD!
WHAT DOES THAT BLOODY KNIFE MEAN?
WHO IS DEAD? SPEAK, MAN!


GONERIL, SIR. . . SHE STABBED HERSELF! AND SHE HAS POISONED HER SISTER! SHE CONFESSED* IT!
BRING THEIR BODIES HERE.
HERE COMES KENT.

* admitted

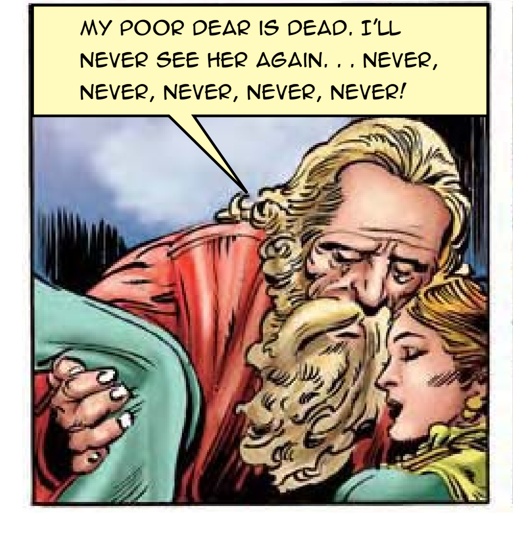

THERE IS NO TIME TO GREET YOU PROPERLY, KENT, BUT WELCOME ANYWAY.
I'M LOOKING FOR THE KING. ISN'T HE HERE?

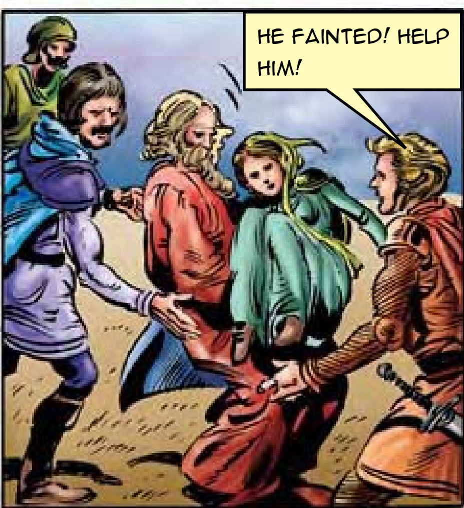

THE KING! I FORGOT! EDMUND, WHERE'S THE KING? WHERE'S CORDELIA?
PERHAPS I CAN DO SOME GOOD BEFORE I DIE. SEND TO THE CASTLE, QUICK! LEAR AND CORDELIA ARE TO BE KILLED.

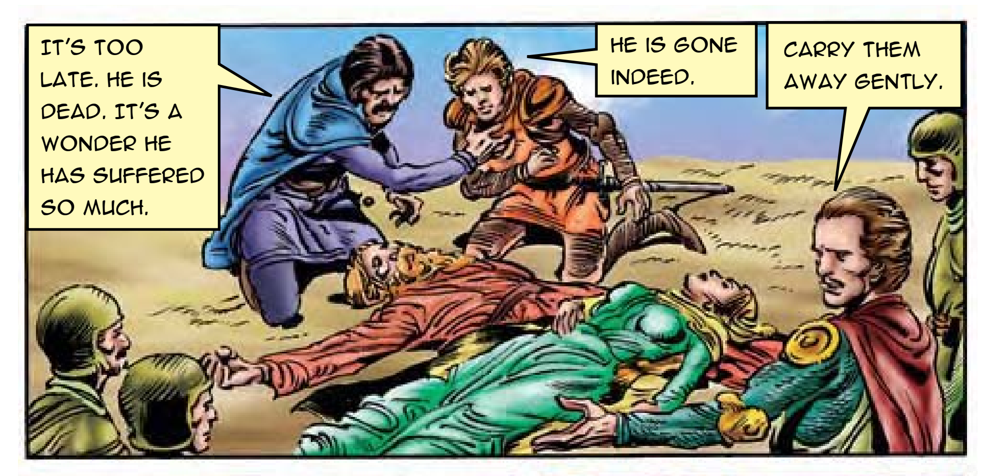

YOUR WIFE AND I GAVE OR-DERS. . . TO HANG CORDE-LIA. . . AND TO SAY SHE DID IT HERSELF! GO QUICKLY!
RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!
I HOPE SHE IS SAFE! CARRY EDMUND AWAY.

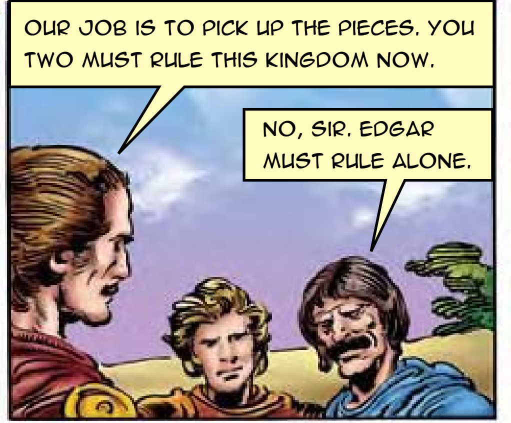

BUT IT WAS TOO LATE.
CRY OUT, YOU MEN OF STONE! SHE'S GONE FOREVER! CORDELIA! CORDELIA!
OH, MY DEAR MASTER!


CORDELIA, STAY! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? I KILLED THE MAN THAT WAS HANGING YOU.
IT'S TRUE, GENTLEMEN, HE DID.


MY POOR DEAR IS DEAD. I'LL NEVER SEE HER AGAIN. . . NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER!


HE FAINTED! HELP HIM!


IT'S TOO LATE. HE IS DEAD. IT'S A WONDER HE HAS SUFFERED SO MUCH.
HE IS GONE INDEED.
CARRY THEM AWAY GENTLY.

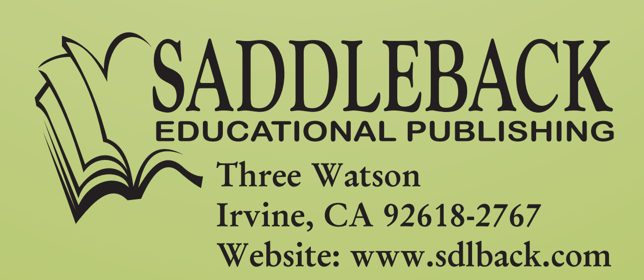

OUR JOB IS TO PICK UP THE PIECES. YOU TWO MUST RULE THIS KINGDOM NOW.
NO, SIR. EDGAR MUST RULE ALONE.


MY HEART IS BROKEN. I MUST FOLLOW MY MAS-TER SOON, ON A LONG JOURNEY TO DEATH.


LEAR, CORDELIA, GLOUCES-TER, EDMUND, REGAN, GONERIL—ALL WERE DEAD. FOR THOSE WHO WERE LEFT, ONLY A SAD FUNERAL MARCH RE-MAINED.
YES, I WILL RULE THIS LAND. AND NOTHING LIKE THIS SHALL EVER HAPPEN AGAIN!
THE END

King Lear

Lear, the aging king, decides to relinquish his throne and divide his kingdom evenly among his three daughters as determined by their affirmations of love. Enraged and disappointed over daughter Cordelia's declaration, he banishes her and divides his kingdom equally between her two sisters. Jealousy and pride consume the two as they seek to control the kingdom. Treachery and betrayal lead to tragedy as the king slowly loses his grip on reality.



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